



Entrepreneurship Education at Higher Learning Institutions (HLI): Policy Mismatch and Recommendations

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ABSTRACT

Recognizing the importance of entrepreneurship as one of the engines of economic growth. The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) has launched MOHE Guide to Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2021 – 2025. The main aim of the plan is to form holistic entrepreneurial ecosystem that will encourage young entrepreneurs to venture into business upon their graduation. Past studies on youth entrepreneurship development mainly concentrated on the public universities in Malaysia. Studies on the youth entrepreneurial development at the private universities still untrodden. Despite various efforts and policy initiated by the government, the youth entrepreneurship achievement is still unsatisfactory. Hence, the objectives of this paper are to review the impact of youth entrepreneurship policy at the higher learning institutions particularly at the private universities; to identify issues and challenges of youth entrepreneurial development programmes; and finally, this paper will give recommendations to enhance entrepreneurial education development at the private universities. This paper reviewed past literatures on entrepreneurial development at higher education in Malaysia. The findings of this paper revealed that the private universities were unable to leverage to the youth entrepreneurship development programmes designed by the government; there is lack of synchronization of entrepreneurship curriculum and modules from foundation level to master's degree level; and there were insufficient support systems to nurture young entrepreneur at the tertiary level. Lastly, this paper able to provide several policy recommendations that can be considered to improve the youth entrepreneurship development particularly at private higher learning institutions in Malaysia.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The blueprint of National Entrepreneurship Policy (DKN) 2030 aims to create an entrepreneurial culture in Malaysia society and improve the country's competitive in the world economy by the year 2030. In line with this initiative, the Ministry of Higher Education has launched MOHE Guide to Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2021 – 2025 with aims to develop and produce successful youth entrepreneurs at higher learning institutions (HLIs).

As of 2019, there are 49,983 students has started their initial business venture at the higher learning institutions (HLIs) and 7,148 graduates become an entrepreneur upon

completion of their studies (MOHE, 2022). Wan Yusof and Mohammed Lame (2012) noted that universities play an important role in nurturing youth entrepreneurs through entrepreneurship education at the universities. In the review, the authors noted that despite entrepreneurship programmes that have been designed, there is a need to be redesigned and re-evaluate the current curriculum in order to achieve the objectives.

Despite much attention on entrepreneurship education at HLIs, the literature search revealed that limited studies conducted on entrepreneurship education at private higher learning

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Table 1. Graduate Entrepreneur and Student Entrepreneurs at HLIs

Year		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
No of Students		309,834	390,372	427,343	531,513	
Key Indicator	Performance	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target
Student Get Entrepreneurship Exposure		60%	60%	70%	75%	80%
Graduate student		2.5%	2.5%	3%	3.1%	3.5%
Student Entrepreneurs		3%	3%	6%	5%	9%
Lecturer Possessing Entrepreneurial Expertise		300	2,206	600	1,260	900
						1,988
						1,200
						2,079
						1,500

institutions. Past studies on youth entrepreneurship development mainly concentrated on the public universities in Malaysia. Studies on the youth entrepreneurial development at the private universities still untrodden. Despite various efforts and policy initiated by the government, the youth entrepreneurship development is still have room for improvements. In addition, limited studies focused on policy impact of youth entrepreneurial development and entrepreneurship education practices at the private universities. Studies in entrepreneurship education at private university is important because as reported by The Edge (2016), there are close to 500 private HLIs (386 colleges, 25 universities colleges and 71 universities) with 524,350 students from 1,253,500 students' study at HLIs. In meeting the Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2021 – 2025 goals and ensuring the youth in private HLIs will not be marginalized in entrepreneurship education. Hence, there is a need to look at how entrepreneurship education practices at private higher learning institutions.

In light of the above, this paper aims to review the impact of youth entrepreneurship policy at the higher learning institutions particularly at the private universities; to review entrepreneurship education curriculum; and to identify issues and challenges of youth entrepreneurial development programmes. Finally, this paper provides some insights to enhance entrepreneurial education development at the private universities.

1.1 Overview of Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneur comes from two French root words; "Entre" which means between and "Preneur" means taking part. In a simple literal translation, entrepreneur means to undertakes something. While entrepreneurship has many definitions. For instance, Stevenson (1990) defined entrepreneurship as "the pursuit of opportunity beyond resources controlled.

Specifically, in the section this paper presents the entrepreneurship education in HLIs. Entrepreneurship education at HLIs is one of the pillars in education policy. Many countries have taken the initiatives to introduce entrepreneurship education at HLIs. According to Yonca and Nuray (2006), the introduction of entrepreneurship education at HLIs in major parts of the world has started since 1990s.

Many scholars supported the idea of introducing entrepreneurship education at HLIs (Kuratko, 2011; Wyckham, 1989). However, scholars have different views on how the entrepreneurship education should be taught (Hytti & O'Gorman, 2004). The delivery of entrepreneurship education can use various platforms such as media, seminar and lectures. The bottom line of the entrepreneurship education is to ensure youth is equipped with entrepreneurial skills and prepare an individual to become an entrepreneur.

Many scholars believe that by introducing the entrepreneurial at the HLIs will enable to train youth entrepreneurs with the right entrepreneurial culture and mindset and provide a platform for them to create a business venture and become an entrepreneur upon graduation. This narrative is supported by many studies, student who involved the entrepreneurial activities during the studies at HLIs has strong inclination to become entrepreneurs after completing their studies (Johansen, 2010; Sanchez, 2010; and Mwasalwiba, 2010).

1.2 Entrepreneurship Education Practices in Malaysia

In line with the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 (NEP 2030) which aims to increase numbers of capable entrepreneurs, particularly in the SME sector. MOHE has started presenting the Entrepreneurship Development Policy for Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE, 2010) in 2010. The 2010 policy focused on three areas namely (1) entrepreneurial education at HLIs, (2) nurture graduates with entrepreneurial attributes; (3) to improve number of graduate entrepreneurs. Historically, the efforts to encourage universities graduates to participated in entrepreneurship has started way back in 1975. For instance, ITM (now Universiti Teknologi MARA) has established Malaysian Entrepreneurship Development Centre (MEDEC)

Recently, the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) has launched MOHE Guide to Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2021 – 2025 as a new narrative to develop and produce successful youth entrepreneurs at higher learning institutions (HLIs). Reviewing the achievement of entrepreneurship education in Malaysia from 2016 to 2019, it shows a remarkable improvement. The above statistics shows the achievement of

entrepreneurship education at the public universities in Malaysia as summarize in the Table 1.

The above table shows that over the past 4 years the public universities managed to produce 5 percent of the graduates become youth entrepreneurs. The public universities able to exposure the entrepreneurial education almost to all students studied at public universities with the strengths of more than 2,000 qualified educators. However, based on the review by the researchers there is limited statistic on entrepreneurship education practices at the private higher learning institutions in Malaysia. In term of entrepreneurship education delivery, has conducted a survey on entrepreneurship education practices at 20 public universities, polytechnics and colleges in Malaysia. According to EIE Report (2020), MOHE revealed 5 main findings related to

- d) Entrepreneurship Ecosystem: Eight (8) universities have one incubator centre and have strong HLIs-industry linkages
- e) Entrepreneurial Assessments: Most of the universities adopted the Pelan Tindakan Keusahawanan 2015-2020 Model.

In summary, the initiatives introduced by MOHE able to inculcate the entrepreneurial momentum at the public universities in Malaysia.

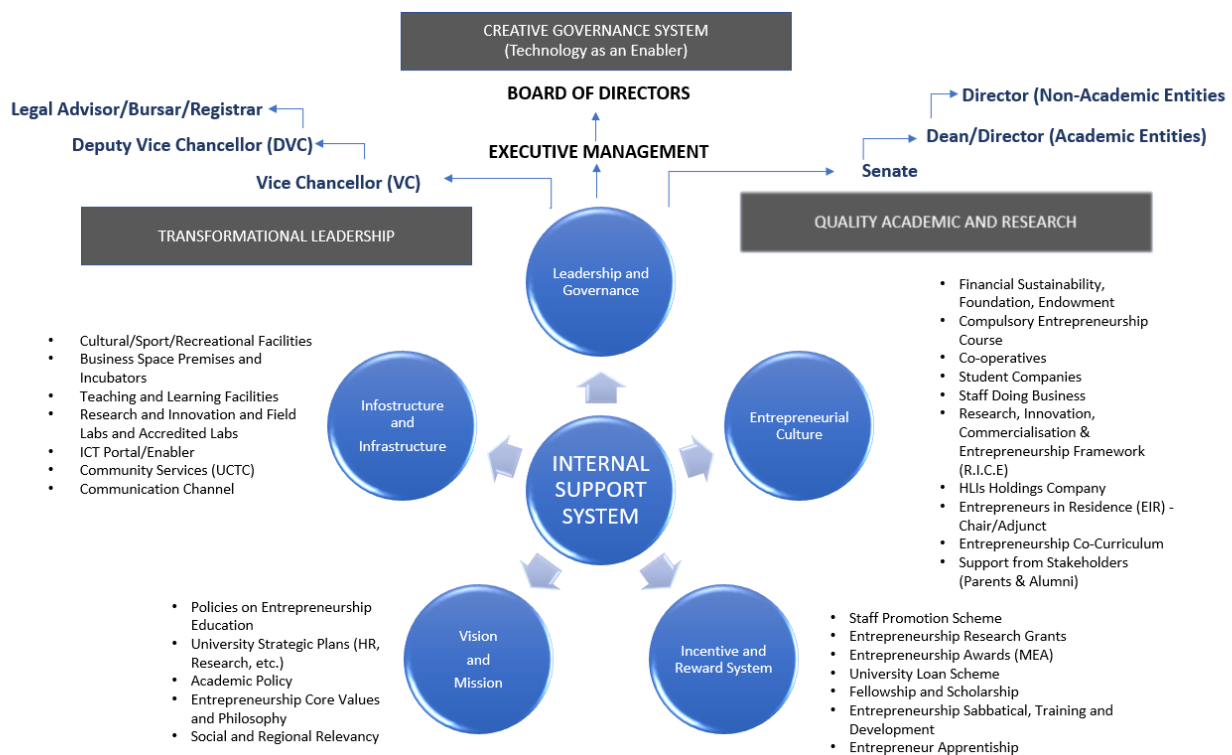


Fig.1. Entrepreneurship Ecosystem (MOHE,2020)

Malaysia entrepreneurship education practices at public universities as summarized below:

- a) Entrepreneurship Integrated Curriculum: On average two (2) entrepreneurship subjects were offered in each programme
- b) Student Entrepreneurial Activities: On average between 10-20 entrepreneurial related s and activities per year
- c) Student Entrepreneurship Development Programme: 16 public universities offer entrepreneurship mentoring and coaching programmes; and provide entrepreneurship facilities such as kiosks, shop lots and mall at the universities and students run the business

1.3 HLIs Entrepreneurship Education Ecosystem in Malaysia

Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2021 – 2025 which was launched on 19th February, 2021 has three strategic thrusts include encompass efforts to good entrepreneurship ecosystem; focus on high impact entrepreneurship network; emphasize on innovation and technology based entrepreneurship. To drive entrepreneurial culture, MOHE has come out with an inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystem for HLIs in Malaysia as shown in Figure 1- . It has five (5) important components which include leadership and governance, incentive and reward system, vision and mission, infostructure and infrastructure to drive the entrepreneurial agenda at HLIs in Malaysia with 4 main stakeholders play an important role consists of inclusivity of HLIs and governance, staff, university students and the industry. With this ecosystem

Table 2. Entrepreneurship Education at Selected Private Universities (Din et al.2020)

	UNIRAZAK(*)	UTAR(*)	UTEM(*)	KUIM(*)	CURTIN UNIVERSITY	HELP University
Programme	Bachelor of Business Management (Entrepreneurship) (Hons)	Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons) (Entrepreneurs hip)	Bachelor of Technopreneurs hip with Honours (BTEC)	Bachelor of Business Administration (Entrepreneurs hip) (Hons)	Bachelor of Entrepreneurship and Marketing (Double Major)	Bachelor of Business (Entrepreneursh ip) (Hons)
Duration of Study	9 Semesters (3 Years)	6 Semesters (3 Years)	8 Semesters (4 Years)	8 Semesters (4 Years)	6 Semester (4 Years)	6 Semesters (3 Years)
Course Structure	The details course structure of respective programme can be assessed through respective university prospectus or website.					

framework, it will assist MOHE to deliver effective entrepreneurship education in Malaysia

2. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS (HLIs)

In this section, this paper reviews the delivery of entrepreneurial education at the private universities. There are two approaches the entrepreneurship education at private higher learning institutions, is either it is offered either as a programme or as a subject in a programme.

2.1 Entrepreneurship Education Offer as A Programme at Selected Private Universities

A review was conducted by Din et. al (2020) on the entrepreneurship education was offered as a programme at six private universities. The curriculum structure is summarized in Table 2 above.

Based on the table, the duration of the programme is offered varies from 3 years to 4 years. In terms of components, it is varied from university to university. Some universities embedded the Islamic components or technopreneurs elements as the core component in their entrepreneurship programme curriculum. Other universities solely focused the entrepreneurship components as majoring subjects.

2.2 Entrepreneurship Education Structure at a private university

In meeting the objective of this paper, this paper conducted a review on how entrepreneurship education curriculum structure was structured at a private university. The findings showed the following:

2.2.1 Entrepreneurship Subjects Offer at Various Departments

A comparison was made on how entrepreneurship at two departments. Table 3 below shows the summary the structure of entrepreneurship subject at a university. Based on the below table summary, the review revealed the following findings:

2.2.2 Curriculum Development

The syllabus for entrepreneurship subjects were not developed by a central committee. The entrepreneurship education was offered as one of the subjects in a programme. There is lack of entrepreneurial knowledge continuation in terms of the curriculum development from the Foundation level to Master level. Another short coming, the Diploma student is granted an exemption for Entrepreneurship subject when the student who enrolled to Degree programme. In addition, there is lack of continuation, in term of the teaching of entrepreneurship knowledge, as this subject is not offered at all programme level. In terms of the number of credit hours, it varies from one program to another program. Finally, in terms of subject assessment, there is lack of consistency in terms of whether the entrepreneurship subject should have final examination or not.

2.2.3 Support Services

The review showed that there is no special unit to coordinate the entrepreneurial activities at the university and relied on the student affair department and educators to facilitate the entrepreneurship activities at the university. In Grants, Training and Collaboration Industries. The review also noted that both departments did not receive any grant supports or training invitations from governments agencies and lack of collaboration with industries in nurturing youth entrepreneurship at the university.

2.3 Issues and Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education

The EIE policy paper released by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE,2020) has identified several issues and challenges related to entrepreneurship education at higher learning institutions which include teaching and learning; curriculum content; growth mindset; business direction; research and commercialization; business initiatives; professional; entrepreneurship experts; and leadership and governance. These issues can be narrow down into 3 core issues namely on youth entrepreneurs, HLIs, and other stake holders.

The first issue is related to youth entrepreneur growth mindset, business direction, business initiatives, and research and commercialization. The paper disclosed that in order to produce graduate entrepreneurs, university has to train the university students with growth mindset which is currently lacking. Next, the youth entrepreneurs should be expose to new business landscape such as technology augmentation,

There is a need to look on approach to teach entrepreneurship to Generation Y. It is noted that the present entrepreneurship curriculum content is too general and brief; and there is a need to relook on the curriculum contents. Finally, there is a need to increase the number of lecturers with real business world experience.

Table 3. Comparison of Entrepreneurship offers as subjects at various level

Department	Comparison	Foundation	Diploma	Degree	Master
A	No of Entrepreneurship Subject	1	2	2	Not Offer
	Credit Hours	3	3	3	
	Assessment	With final exam	With and without final exam	With final exam	Not Offer
	Exemption			Yes	
	Syllabus Development Synchronization	Stand-alone syllabus and each program meet the academic regulatory curriculum structure.			
	Collaboration with Industries or Grants Received government agencies	Lack of collaboration with industries; and lack of access to government grants.			
	Entrepreneurial Unit at the University	There is no entrepreneurship unit and entrepreneurship activities frequently organized by the Student Affairs Department or the faculty.			
B	No of Entrepreneurship Subject	Not Offer	1	2	Not Offer
	Credit Hours		2	2 and 4	
	Assessment		Without final exam	With final exam	
	Exemption			Yes	
	Syllabus Development Synchronization	Standalone syllabus and each program meet the academic regulatory curriculum structure			
	Collaboration with industries or Grants Received government agencies	Lack of collaboration with industries; lack of access to government grants			
	Centralized entrepreneurial Unit	There is no entrepreneurship unit and entrepreneurship activities frequently organized by the Student Affairs Department or the faculty.			

digitalization, Ais, IoTs, machine learning and robotics that shape the future industries. The next area is research and commercialization, student should be given the opportunities to commercialize their business ideas through the start-up or spin-off firms. Finally, students should be aware about the initiatives and grants provide by the government to grow their business.

The second core issue is related to teaching and learning, curriculum content, and professional entrepreneurship experts.

The last issue is related to leadership and governance from the stakeholders. On leadership and governance, in order to meet the MOHE entrepreneurship agenda, all the stakeholders must have bold leadership and commitment towards achieving the plan and avoid bureaucracy and slow decision making in implementing the EIE plan.

Issues that were highlighted by the MOHE policy paper are consistent with the review conducted by Rahim et. al. (2015). The paper noted that there are four challenges of

entrepreneurship education at HLIs include commitment towards entrepreneurship education, inadequate educators with entrepreneurial background and mixed understanding of the objectives of entrepreneurship education at HLIs and financing. The first challenge is dilemma faced by student in juggling between studies and business. Students are burden with academic's assignment and unable to focus to build up the business while at the university. The second challenge related to lack of educators with sound entrepreneurial knowledge and experiences. It resulted the entrepreneurship subjects were taught by educators with unqualified educators with limited entrepreneurship background. The next challenge is the mixed understanding of entrepreneurship education as some universities focus on inculcate entrepreneurship characters and the second groups believe on produce graduate entrepreneurs. The last challenge is related to access to finance. The study noted that youth entrepreneurs from HLIs have difficulties to access to finance due to the size of fund is limited and unaware about the availability of youth financing.

3. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Aligning the research objectives on entrepreneurship practices at the public universities with the findings of this paper. The findings of this paper revealed that the private university unable to leverage to the youth entrepreneurship development programmes designed by the government; there is lack of synchronization of entrepreneurship curriculum and modules from foundation level to master's degree level; and insufficiency of supporting systems to nurture young entrepreneur at the tertiary level. This paper suggests several policy recommendations as follow:

i. *Involvement of private universities in entrepreneurship development programme*

By involving students from the private HLIs to participate in entrepreneurship development programmes, MOHE able to monitor the achievement of youth entrepreneur at private HLIs. By inviting the educators from private HLIs in designing the entrepreneurial development programme and policies, the entrepreneurial education implementation will be more holistic involving both private and public HLIs. MOHE should conduct a town hall or congress with the private HLIs educators to listen their views and challenges in providing the best entrepreneurship education at private HLIs.

ii. *Introduce Entrepreneurship Unit at each university*

Some private universities do not have Entrepreneurship Unit. The students relied heavily on knowledge and skills of entrepreneurship provided from the Entrepreneurship subject which was taught at the universities and events conducted by the university. By having a specific entrepreneurship unit, the private HLIs able to meet some of the objectives set by Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2021 – 2025.

iii. *Synchronization of entrepreneurship curriculum from foundation level to Master level*

As noted in the above findings, there is lack of synchronization of entrepreneurship curriculum from the Foundation level to Master level. In meeting the goals of Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2021 – 2025, there is a need to synchronize the entrepreneurship curriculum right from Foundation level to Master level similar like MPU (Mata Pelajaran Umum)

subjects. This is to ensure the goal to produce youth entrepreneurs upon completion of tertiary education is met and students can access the entrepreneurial knowledge and skills at the university.

iv. *Access to Training and Government Grant*

On access to finance and training, the private HLIs should also be invited to entrepreneur training and granted access to start-up funding. This is to avoid the policy mismatch at private HLIs. Grants funding and financing are the bloodline of a business particularly for the start-up youth entrepreneurs. The start-up entrepreneurs need adequate funding to build the business. Therefore, it is suggested that students from private HLIs should be invited to participate in entrepreneurship training, forum, seminar, and convention organized by MOHE. By doing so, it will accelerate the number of young entrepreneurs from private HLIs upon graduation from the universities and meeting the Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2021 – 2025.

Finally for future research, the paper suggests a comprehensive study should be conducted on entrepreneurship education at private HLIs in Malaysia. The findings of this proposed study will provide a better perspective in youth entrepreneurial development and entrepreneurship education at private HLIs in this country.

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